

President's Corner

The Future Is Now

by Mark Johnson

Death and taxes, two facts of life. As a charitable organization, we were hoping to avoid both. Previously, all chapters were considered part of the whole organization and were able to use our single tax-exempt status as one reference. Recent changes in the tax law required all chapters ("subordinates" in IRS terminology) to file separately but allowed them to continue, each using a separate identification number (EIN). This required MOS to reapply, providing a detailed set of information.

With the help of your chapter officers, our past president, Dr. Wayne Bell, took this on and provided the IRS with the detailed information they sought. Following several weeks of review, the IRS replied with a very detailed response, requiring much more specific information. At this point I took over these responsibilities from Wayne and attempted to gather this information to satisfy the IRS. This was no insignificant feat, as it consisted of more than 400 pages of material. Again, each chapter responded to the call and provided most of what we needed in an astounding four weeks! In some instances this required the adoption of chapter-specific constitutions and by-law changes that involved membership action.

A month after our second submission, IRS presented us with yet another set of criteria to fulfill. In each case, if we did not respond in full to

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The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2011

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WRAPPING UP: 2011 MOS CONFERENCE WISP, GARRETT COUNTY • MAY 20-22

WISP was wonderful! After endless days of rain, the weather cleared up and was beautiful for our stay. The last time we had a Western Maryland conference was 2002 and it seemed all 201 conference participants were very glad to return.

We started out Friday evening with **Kevin Dodge**, keynote speaker. Kevin did his "Night Sounds" program—replete with hilarious but spot-on renditions of just about all the sounds (avian, amphibian, insectan, and yahoo) to be heard in a Maryland night. There was laughter throughout the presentation. Along with the humor, Kevin slipped in quite a bit of knowledge about the creatures found in Western Maryland. Everyone enjoyed it. According to conference evaluations, Kevin was one of our most popular conference speakers. He also led field trips all three days sharing his knowledge and expertise. Kevin was very generous with his time helping to make the conference a success.

Workshops were a little different this year with three on the schedule, plus one talk, over the course of the conference. **Mark Johnson** led off with his "Introduction to Birdwatching" on Friday afternoon followed by a field trip on Saturday. New for us was a corporate sponsor: Tropical Birding, a group offering bird, wildlife, and photography tours all over the world, donated \$1,000 to the conference. **Christian Boix** and **Andrew Spencer**, two of their top birders/tour guides, offered two workshops and a talk. Christian started off Saturday morning



Don Messersmith and Chan Robbins. Don was presented with the American Birding Association's 2011 Chandler Robbins Award for Education and Conservation at Saturday night's business meeting.

with a Digiscoping Workshop and some hands-on experience outdoors. Saturday afternoon **Andrew Spencer** presented a "Birding by Ear" Workshop. Both were very well received. On Sunday the two of them presented "How to Bird the World Most Effectively on a Budget." With programs throughout the three days and field trips, it was a very busy conference.

As usual, **Maryanne Dolan** did an outstanding job running the Silent Auction and Raffle (even though she was feeling under the weather with a cold). Her loyal assistants **Tom** and **Joy Loomis** always contribute so much to this undertaking. Thank you for all of your hard work. The Silent Auction and Raffle beneficiary this year was Allegheny Highlands Conservancy, of which Kevin Dodge is president. This group was vetted by **Maureen Harvey**, former MOS

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President's Corner *continued from page 1*

each of their mandates, the IRS would infer that we no longer wished to pursue tax-exempt status and drop our request (and I assume keep our \$3,000 application fee). Again, everyone provided what we needed, it was off, and I am proud to announce that the IRS has approved our request.

Currently, as long as each chapter's income is below \$25,000, the chapter must file the 990 short form using its own independent EIN. This can be done as late as September 15, 2011 (or the chapter can request an extension). Many chapters attempted to file early this spring, getting notices that the IRS did not recognize their EIN or status. Unfortunately, it took a few months for the word to trickle down to the regional offices, and now many chapters have had success in filing without incident.

The challenge now for us as an organization is to avoid death. Our membership is declining through attrition and we struggle to gain young members. Through the efforts of many involved in Youth MOS, our scholarship committee, and at the chapter level, we endeavor to spark the fire of nature in our kids. We must continue and strive harder to get our children interested in nature as to best preserve it, since they are indeed our future. I think there's a good bumper sticker in this somewhere!

The Maryland Yellowthroat Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

Editor: Lydia Schindler
lydiaschindler@verizon.net
301-977-5252

Designer: Suzanne Probst
msprobst2@verizon.net
410-992-3489

Calendar Editor: Andy Martin
apmartin2@verizon.net
301-294-4805

Chapter Chatter: Jean Wheeler
jswheeler3@verizon.net

Mailing list: Helen Horrocks
hlh_37@yahoo.com
301-831-6315

MOS web site: <http://www.mdbirds.org>

Webmaster: John Hays Christy
SiteMaven@mdbirds.org

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by September 20, 2011 for the November/December 2011 issue.

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Photographs p. 13 Bob Balestri*

Conservation chair, who found the group's conservation goals and beliefs in line with those of MOS. The Silent Auction and Raffle of \$1,227 will be sent to them.

Mother Nature's Store came to the conference this year. As it turns out, it's a new store owned by old friends **Dave and Claire Horvath**. You will still find them in their usual location on Oakland Mills Road in Columbia. As always they had an impressive array of merchandise.

I think everyone enjoyed the field trips in Western Maryland, a very special birding location. **Kathy Calvert** put together an exceptional array of trips; there was something for every taste. Kathy always puts in a lot of thought and time into assembling the field trips and covering all the necessary details to make sure they are a success. This year was no exception. Thank you for doing a great job, Kathy.

At the Saturday evening dinner and Business Meeting, MOS President Mark Johnson presented outgoing treasurer **Emy Holdridge** an Outstanding Service Award for more than ten years of dedicated service to MOS, as well as awards to members of the Atlas Committee. The Chapter Achievement Award went to Caroline County Bird Club in recognition of

their 60th anniversary. Valued Service Awards were given to **Paul O'Brien**, **Norman Saunders**, and **Suzanne Probst**. Historian Don Messersmith presented awards to members with 50 years of continuous MOS membership—**Jan Reese**, **Barbara Johnson**, **Bruce Dwyer**, and **Charlotte Folk**. Mark gave a Valued Service Award for **Don Messersmith**, keeper of the 50-year pins. **Don Jewell** was recognized for winning the conference pin design contest. Mark made an award to **John Malcolm** for doing a fantastic job designing and preparing the awards given at the conference and for making awards for chapters.

Another exciting award was given to **Don Messersmith**. The American Birding Association's Board of Directors voted to present Dr. Messersmith with its 2011 Chandler Robbins Award for Education and Conservation. **Lou Morrell**, Chair of the ABA Board of Directors, came to WISP to present the award—with **Chan Robbins** himself in attendance.

Special thanks to all who helped make this a very successful conference. Keep in mind everything is all done by volunteers. Thank you for a job well done.

—*Janet Shields*
Conference Chair

ABOUT THOSE EVALUATIONS: *A few comments from the Conference Chair*

Complaints about driving time to field trips: Obviously we have no control over this. Very careful consideration is given to drive time when assigning departure times for field trips. If possible, we try to stay reasonably close to the conference center.

Field Trip Leader expertise: All of our field trip leaders are volunteers. One of Kathy's hardest jobs is finding enough leaders for the trips. These leaders have a wide range of skills but all are giving up time to make sure we have enough trips. Depending on the location of the conference, they do not necessarily have time to scout in advance. With rising gas prices and possibly having to take time off from work, I don't think it's reasonable to expect this. Let's just relax and enjoy being outside together looking for birds.

Number of participants on field trips: The usual field trips are limited to 20

people. Listers' Trips and some specialty trips have 15. I know you would like smaller groups but we just don't have enough leaders.

Field trip registration opened earlier than advertised: This has been done a number of ways. Officially it opens at 11:00 AM. A line always starts about 9:00 AM, sometimes earlier. We've handled this in a number of ways and found it most efficient to start letting people sign up once we are ready—about 10:00 AM. We have waited until 11:00 AM and had very long lines, with it taking 1½ to 2 hours to get through the line. The same people seem to come early every year regardless of how we handle this. It has always been emphasized you need to get there early if you want a specific trip. I will make a point for 2012 to announce the official time is 11:00 AM but we will start early once things are in order.

What: MOS Winter Conference
When: February 24-26, 2012
Where: Ocean City
HQ: Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel
 20100 Coastal Highway
Who: You
Why: It's Fun!

In addition to two workshops (see below), I'm working on a pelagic out of Ocean City with **Paul Guris**. **Kathy Calvert**, kathycalvert1@comcast.net, is looking for field trip leaders. **Maryanne Dolan** (Maryanne.dolan@gmail.com) seeks help with the auction; please contact her.

— *Janet Shields*
 Conference Chair

Staying Toasty at the Ocean

Our first-ever winter conference and it's in Ocean City. What's not to like? "The weather," you say. "Who wants to spend afternoons outdoors in freezing temperatures with feet slowly freezing into blocks of ice?"

Stop worrying because that's not going to happen. The State Education Committee has lined up afternoon workshops sure to keep you contentedly indoors.

Friday afternoon **Derek Stoner**, former president of the Delaware Ornithological Society and a dedicated "ducker," will offer a workshop on ducks and waterfowl with an emphasis on what to expect in mid-Atlantic waters. Derek gives a great presentation and all are assured of coming out of this workshop with some great tips on how to ID those pesky ducks in flight.

On Saturday afternoon **Scott Smith**, Wildlife Diversity Ecologist, Maryland DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service, will update us on the Herp Atlas. Scott has spent the past 20 years professionally chasing "the other birds"—our scaly reptiles—plus the forever-connected amphibians, as part of his work with MD DNR.

— *Maryanne Dolan, Chair*
 State Education Committee

Conference Auction

The MOS Conference is fast approaching, so now is a great time to gather up those items for the Silent Auction. Dig deep into those closets

and shelves. We accept anything so long as it is bird-related, but "stuff" moves faster than prints. I don't know why, but somehow prints—no matter how lovely—have a hard time finding a new home. But not to worry... someone... somewhere... is bound to like one of your castoffs.

So go grab a box, start stuffing it with books, knickknacks, anything that vaguely resembles a bird, and bring it along to the conference in February. The Auction is loads of fun and all proceeds go to a good cause.

— *Maryanne Dolan, Chair*
 Silent Auction/Raffle

Winter Birds: Artist Alert

The winter birds of Ocean City offer some exciting new possibilities for the Pin Design Contest: think Purple Sandpiper, Harlequin Duck, Common Eider.

The rules are simple: the bird must be appropriate for the conference; it must contain the phrases "MOS" and "2012;" the artist must be a member of MOS; and entries must be in **HARD COPY. The deadline for the 2012 contest is November 1, 2011.**

Put your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, chapter affiliation, and the species on the back of each entry. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886.

To see all the rules and more tips about designing pins for the contest, visit the MOS web site or contact John at 301-977-5788 or at smudgie@comcast.net.

GOSHAWK REWARD FUND

Sometime between May 16 and June 17, Maryland's only known nesting Northern Goshawk was shot and killed, leaving her three orphaned chicks in the nest to die. The nest was in the Savage River State Forest outside Grantsville, Garrett County, near Westernport Road and McAndrews Hill Road.

Maryland Natural Resources Police (NRP) is asking for the public's help in identifying the person or persons responsible for this crime. Anyone with information about this incomprehensible action or description of individuals or vehicles seen in the area is asked to call the Catch-a-Poacher hotline at 800-635-6124. Callers may remain anonymous and are eligible for reward money.

The shooting of the nesting goshawk—a State-listed endangered species—elicited a range of reactions among MOS members. Some expressed an interest in making donations to increase the reward that was promptly offered by the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus for the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible for the shooting. There was no clear means for those wanting to make a contribution to do so, and so after several days of discussion by the MOS Executive Committee and a few other concerned members, it was decided that MOS would fill this need by accepting donations into the general account but earmarking those funds towards this effort.

Some persons questioned whether or not our organization should be involved in this effort. Our response was that MOS was filling the demand for a "hub" or "focal point" for individuals wanting to collectively raise the incentive for informants to step forward. Some persons justifiably asked whether the fund signaled a shift away from more traditional MOS conservation strategies such as habitat preservation and public education. The answer to that is simply "no."

To date, MOS members have contributed \$1,900 to this fund. Donations will be held for three years or until a conviction is secured and an informant identified. If there is no conviction after three years, donors will be given the option of (1) receiving a full refund of their donation amount; (2) continuing to leave the money in the Goshawk Reward Fund for another three-year period; or (3) directing that the donation be used for other MOS conservation efforts.

Persons still wishing to make a donation to the fund may do so by writing a check made out to "Maryland Ornithological Society" with the memo line "Goshawk Reward Fund." Checks can be mailed to: Maryland Ornithological Society, Goshawk Reward Fund, 4141 Quail Way, Havre de Grace, MD 21078-1612. Please note that donations for this particular fund are not tax-deductible.

— *Dave Webb*
 Treasurer, MOS
 Harford Bird Club



ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

In June, *Leo Weigant* poked around in South Florida to seek endemics, to fill out his Year List, and, with luck, to refind one of the rarities he saw last year at this time. Driving south from West Palm Beach provided a most discouraging visit to Loxahatchee NWR where no waders or waterfowl were to be seen at all; every marsh in sight was bone dry. Only an overhead Snail Kite at the entrance “saved” the visit. Better luck was available at the Wakodahatchee WWTP boardwalk, where every wader, save Wood Stork and Roseate Spoonbill, was visible, most close up. A Limpkin and flying Least Bittern boosted both his spirits and the trip list. Next morning provided a family of six Burrowing Owls at the Tamiami Airport on the way to the Baptist Hospital and its parakeets. An afternoon in the Everglades provided more dried-up ponds (Eco & Mrazek) but Paurotis Pond provided both the spoonbills and Wood Storks flying and roosting. The most impressive sighting of the trip was a pair of Swallow-tailed Kites tree-top high over the road in a driving tropical storm. The next day driving the Keys produced the usual suspects: Frigatebirds high up, Gray Kingbirds on wires, Roseate Terns at the county buildings south of the Marathon airport, and . . . finally, down on No-name Key, a best-ever look at a Black-whiskered Vireo. No LaSagra’s Flycatcher, no Cuban Peewee, but the Common Mynahs around the Burger King at US1 and Palm Drive seemed oblivious to the many plastic owls set on the roof to scare them away. What more could you ask for?

In May, *Leo’s* New Mexico trip was primarily for visiting friends, but he couldn’t resist a few side trips for birding. The Rio Grande Valley Nature Center (only a few miles from the Albuquerque airport) provided some excellent birding—on arrival, hundreds of Violet-green Swallows flew under a channel bridge along with Cinnamon Teal, roadrunners, and Wilson’s Warblers. A brief stop there on the way home provided, within a few yards of one another, a Cassin’s Finch and Virginia’s and McGillivray’s Warblers. Another side trip included a winding road up into the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Dialogue: “Wow! That’s a Lewis’s Woodpecker; I didn’t expect to see them here. Wouldn’t it be neat if we saw a Clark’s Nutcracker? We’d have both explorers at once.” Well, it took only five minutes; hey, when you’re on a roll.... Chaco Canyon National Monument provided a Sage Thrasher and Black-throated Sparrow, and Bandelier National Monument offered Pine Grosbeak and Townsend’s Solitaire (both seen, alas, in areas since burned out).

The best sighting of the trip occurred near Jemez Falls SP where, on the trail down to the falls (and its dippers), looking downslope he saw a robin flying very fast and low through the pines—followed a split-second later by a sleek unknown whose shape provoked a cry of “accipiter!” then “BIG accipiter!” *Leo* had never seen a goshawk in flight from above, but his handy Sibley’s confirmed that black and gray pattern. The trip list gradually accumulated 65+ new year birds—bright-plumaged Grace’s Warblers, Western Tanagers, a female Hepatic Tanager, Lark Bunting, Steller’s Jay, Red Crossbills, etc. *Leo* smiled all the way home.

—*Leo Weigant*

CAROLINE COUNTY

The Caroline County Chapter sadly reports that long-time member *Catherine A. Trice* of Denton died June 26 at Candle Light Cove Assisted Living in Easton. She was 92. Catherine was an avid birder and gardener and will be missed.

—*Debby Bennett*



Frederick Chapter President Kathy Calvert and Frederick County Atlas Coordinator David Smith present copies of the first and second Atlas to C. Burr Artz Public Library Director Darrell Batson (left).

FREDERICK COUNTY

On April 29, the Frederick Bird Club donated a copy of both the first and the second *Atlas of Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia* to the C. Burr Artz Public Library in Frederick. This donation was made in a special presentation at the library by Chapter President *Kathy Calvert* and the Frederick County Atlas Coordinator *David Smith*. Library Director *Darrell Batson* accepted these beautiful works for the library’s collection.

—*Kathy Calvert*

HARFORD COUNTY

In June, *Madeline Lovera* and *Jean Wheeler* traveled to Alaska with Naturalist Journeys. Birds in Nome were still arriving and Bluethroats and Arctic Warbler were scarce. The Kougarc Road is still home to the Bristle-thighed Curlew. A day in Kenai Fjord NP was picture-perfect. Kittlitz’s and Ancient Murrelets were easily seen. The day was warm and sunny and the calving of Northwestern Glacier was spectacular. Humpback, orca, and fin whale and Dall’s porpoise were sighted. The group spent four days in Camp Denali and saw the massif on two of the days. Arctic Warbler arrived while we were there. After way too many years of searching, *Jean* finally found her nemesis bird, Boreal Chickadee.

—*Jean Wheeler*

HOWARD COUNTY

Everything you ever wanted to know about lichens in Howard County can now be found on the Howard County chapter's web site. Check under "Flora and Fauna" for *Richard Orr's* booklet on the subject.

Bob and Jo Solem's impressive compilation of *Fungi and Slime Molds of Howard County, MD*, also on the web site, www.howardbirds.org, will inspire beginner and veteran mycologists alike.

Congratulations to club member *Barry Miller*, whose photo of an Inca Jay was selected as the photo of the week on the <http://birdwatching.com> web site.

Costa Rica is certainly a hot destination for birds but for *Sue Muller* it was a trip rich in biodiversity and culture. Habitats ranged from rain forests to mangrove swamps and on to the sea. However, to really appreciate the biodiversity, it was important for Sue to understand the value of ecotourism in preserving these habitats. Ecotourism is the second major economy of Costa Rica. Without birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts, many of the rain forests would be cut down. Says Sue, "The people in Costa Rica appreciate their biodiversity and love to share it with the world." She toured the Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge and Porte Verde National Park and saw incredible wildlife, from coatis and sloths to iguanas and caimans to Boat-billed Herons and the endangered Scarlet Macaw. Sue will never forget the morning sounds of the Howler Monkeys! One day a man asked Sue if she had seen the national bird and he pointed out the Clay-colored Robin. In a land of Toucans and Scarlet Macaws, she thought the robin an odd choice for the national bird. The man said, "Beauty is what you hear." Then the bird sang the most beautiful song and Sue understood the choice.

Of keen interest to Sue was seeing many of our local birds on their wintering grounds. In fact she saw more than 20 Baltimore Orioles in one tree! That would be more than any of us would expect to see in one season here. States Sue, "I felt good that my hard-earned dollars were supporting ecotourism in Costa Rica and protecting the wintering grounds of the

birds I so love to see in Maryland. We here in Maryland can make a difference in the lives of our migrating birds by purchasing shade-grown coffee from Costa Rica and other Central American countries. It is that easy to make a difference!" Sue picked up 53 life birds on the trip and cracked the 900 mark with a very large Jabiru.

—Kate Tufts

MONTGOMERY COUNTY


Tom Marko, former Montgomery Bird Club member and trip leader, writes that he is alive and well in Okinawa, Japan. In March, Tom participated in a birding trip in southern Thailand where he ticked a total of 163 species, including 86 lifers. Ironically, life bird #1,000 was an Arctic Warbler in the tropics. In June, Tom recorded his 155th species on Okinawa, a juvenile Lesser Frigatebird, most likely a windblown vagrant from the recent typhoon, he says.

Gail Mackiernan and *Barry Cooper* write that they escaped the Washington heat in the second half of June on a cruise to the Arctic aboard the expedition ship *Plancius*. The 11-day cruise started in Aberdeen, Scotland and voyaged ever northward, with zodiac landings at such remote locations as North Rona, the Faroes, Jan Mayen Land, and the final destination, Svalbard (Spitsbergen). They recorded about 90 species of birds, dominated by impressive seabird colonies at every stop—tens of thousands of gannets, kittiwakes, fulmars, Common and Thick-billed Murres, puffins, and Dovekies (perhaps several hundred thousand of the latter in a single huge colony). Other goodies included many Great Skua, Arctic and Pomarine Jaegers, Arctic Terns, Glaucous Gulls, and breeding Barnacle and Pink-footed Geese. Good views were obtained of an Ivory Gull as well. Land birds and shorebirds were relatively few but included Rock Ptarmigan, endemic Faroes races of Winter Wren and Starling (!), Purple Sandpiper and Red Phalarope in breeding plumage, and the "house sparrow" of Svalbard—Snow Bunting. The mammal list was also exciting, topped by good looks at polar bear,


walrus, blue and humpback whales, bearded, ringed, and harp seals as well as the diminutive Svalbard reindeer. Gail wrote that for most of the trip they enjoyed excellent, sunny weather—"which made the spectacular ice-bound scenery even more beautiful."

After a trip to the opposite side of the world, *Suzanne Dater* posted the following: "Midway Atoll is the world's largest tropical seabird rookery and I was fortunate to be there for nine days in mid-April. It falls within the Hawaiian Archipelago and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2010 to prevent the extinction of world's longest-flying species—Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses, threatened over many years by feather mania, long-line fishing, war, invasive animals and plants, plastics, and climate change. The Laysan Albatross survival rate before the tsunami was only eight chicks for every 100 breeding pairs. The tsunami's toll was over 110,000 albatross. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has restricted commercial fishing and is removing invasive plants, plastics, mice, asbestos and lead-based paint from a few of the many WWII buildings. Despite their fine efforts, the job is far from finished due to lack of funding.

"It was marvelous to see thousands of albatross communicating with each other and their chicks. The young are totally dependent upon their parents, who fly thousands of miles to feed them and have a 7-foot wingspan and noses that can smell fish in the sea. The island was a cacophony of bird calls—whistles, croaking, and clicking beaks like castanets—above the sound of high winds and crashing waves on pearly beaches. I observed and photographed the following species: Laysan Albatross, Black-footed Albatross, a hybrid of both, Laysan Duck, White Fairy Tern, Common Brown Noddy, Bonin Petrel, Long-tailed Tropicbird, Pacific Golden-Plover, Bristle-thighed Curlew, Great Frigatebird, introduced Canary and Common Myna, Laysan monk seal, and green sea turtle. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



Fall Count 2011



The annual Fall Seasonal Count sponsored by MOS will be held Saturday, September 17, and/or Sunday, September 18, in the Maryland-DC area. For years several counties have held organized counts on the third weekend of September; the MOS Board has left the choice of day—Saturday or Sunday—to local chapters and coordinators. In areas without an identified coordinator, individual parties submit their results directly to the statewide coordinator for inclusion.

Anyone can participate, regardless of skill level. Every pair of eyes helps, and it is great fun.

The guidelines for this count are the same as those used for all seasonal counts. Local coordinators will assign volunteers to areas, honoring requests whenever possible. Party leaders are responsible for tracking party miles and times, names of participants, and documentation for unusual sightings.

A checklist compilation form is available on the MOS web site, in the “Annual Counts” section: <http://www.mdbirds.org/counts/fall/fallcounts.html>. The list includes the species one would expect to find in Maryland during this season. Those species on the list requiring further written documentation are noted with asterisks, and all write-ins require full details.

The county coordinators who have volunteered so far are listed on the MOS web site. Anyone already organizing a count

or interested in volunteering as a coordinator for another county without a coordinator is encouraged to contact the state Coordinator.

If you don’t have web access or if you are interested in counting in a county without a coordinator, you can contact me directly. Individual parties or other groups (e.g., hawkwatch sites, field trips) who count in areas without a coordinator, but have data for the count period, are asked to submit their data, along with details on the area that was covered, participants, and coverage statistics, directly to me by October 15.

Deadline for submitting completed reports to your county coordinator is no later than October 7, 2011. County compilers are asked to submit compilations to the state coordinator by October 31.

Please plan to join the fun and have a great day birding!

Chuck Stirrat
Fall Count Coordinator
13318 Hunt Ridge, Ellicott City, MD 21042-1155
410-531-2417
ChuckS@msualum.com

Chapter Chatter *continued from page 5*

Mark England, long-time trip leader and guest of honor at this year’s annual social, will again be teaching the Fall “Bird Life” class at the Audubon Naturalist Society. The classes are on Monday nights, 7-9 pm, from Sept 19 to Nov 28 at the Woodend Sanctuary in Chevy Chase.

—Chris Wright

Kingbird, Black-capped and Yellow-green Vireos, Clark’s Nutcracker, Mexican Chickadee, Juniper Titmouse, Clay-colored Robin, Le Conte’s Thrasher, Olive Warbler, a whopping 46 warblers, Olive and Botteri’s Sparrows, Black-vented Oriole, and Evening Grosbeak.

—Karen Harris

TALBOT COUNTY

Bill and Karen Harris started out the year with a trip to Florida in January, finding 121 species of birds. Starting in mid-April they spent a month travelling across country, visiting northern New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas, for some 359 species. YTD total: 464. Some highlights of both trips were Masked Booby, Hook-billed and Snail Kites, Short-tailed and White-tailed Hawks, Crested Caracara, Aplomado Falcon, Scaled and Montezuma Quails, White-crowned Pigeon, Groove-billed Ani, Mexican Spotted Owl, Black Swift, Blue-throated Hummingbird, Elegant Trogon, Green Kingfisher, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Tropical

TRI COUNTY

Come the warmer months and Tri County members start traveling. *Betty Pitney* headed out to Oregon and Nevada for a ten-day trip with Wings. Four days on the coast produced Tufted Puffins and thousands of Common Murres coating the ocean surface. Inland covered the Cascades and Malheur NWR, which encompasses the high desert country of the Great Basin. The burn areas produced White-headed and Black-backed Woodpeckers. Snow on the roads required a long hike for the Mountain Quail. Other highlights were Hermit Warbler, Northern Pygmy Owl, and a look at the Flammulated Owl.

Larry and Jean Fry along with club member *Pete Zerhusen* assisted DNR and MD Coastal Bays on several trips for the annual heron, egret, and ibis counts on Worcester County’s Skimmer Island and South Point Spoils (a dredge deposit island). These counts are held weekly for 2 months during the breeding season. Larry and Jean then joined members of the Harford Bird Club on a trip to Colorado. They circled the state picking up, Chukar, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Dusky Grouse, Virginia’s Warbler, and Williamson’s Sapsucker. The trip produced 147 species. Jean’s 550th bird was Hammond’s Flycatcher. Some of us remember when this little bird put in an appearance in Maryland one November.

Alaska keeps calling. I made a trip to Adak for the Whiskered Auklet. What made the sighting so special was seeing dozens of the auklets on the waves in the Bering Sea from a 14-ft boat that held only four passengers. That’s Alaska.

—Carol Broderick



Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- 2011—THE YEAR OF THE DICKCISSEL! In most years DICKCISSELS in Maryland are few and far between. They have usually been present during nesting season only in widely scattered sites of just a few counties. Somehow, in 2011 things took an amazing turn and the state was practically deluged with DICKCISSELS. The first clue of something special occurred when the 87th Dorchester County May Bird Count recorded the species for the first time in its 87-year history; Harry Armistead, the count coordinator, reported two birds, a male and a female, along Egypt Road near Cambridge on May 7. A trickle of additional sightings occurred through May, and then the sky practically opened up in early June with reports from most locations with reasonably suitable habitat. By mid-June birders were competing to see who could find the most counties holding DICKCISSELS in a single day. Kathy Calvert of Adamstown and Mike Welch of Frederick/Urbana teamed up on June 16 and scored the species in five counties of the Eastern Shore. On July 2 Jim Brighton and Jared Satchell of Talbot County located the species in seven counties on the Western Shore—and for good measure stepped across state lines to tick the species in three additional states. Eventually the bird was found in 16 counties, providing joy and entertainment for large numbers of state birders. As of early July, DICKCISSEL reports were still coming in, showing that the birds have been present in many locations through what is known to be their normal breeding season.
- A much different experience was provided when a LONG-BILLED CURLEW paused briefly at Swan Creek in Anne Arundel County on May 23. (See page 10 for article on Swan Creek.) Ed Carlson and Stan Arnold of Anne Arundel County were in the right place at the right time and promptly texted news of their discovery; Bill Hubick, Dan Haas, and Rob Ostrowski made it to the scene within minutes. The CURLEW eventually stretched to reveal the underwing profile, issued a few “cur-lee” vocalizations, moved to another cell, then lifted up, circled a bit, and flew north over Key Bridge. It was not seen again. Ed issued his on-site report at 6:24 PM, and Dan posted his farewell report at 7:12.
- Later in the summer another Swan Creek observation emerged to confirm the success of the area’s management. A BLACK RAIL showed up June 10 and stayed 10 days, singing persistently. The BLACK RAIL, as an endangered species, was particularly welcome at this new wetland site. The bird’s presence was not immediately announced, in hopes of protecting the bird from being disturbed by human visitors. As the presence of the bird became known, Stan Arnold, who had been working closely with the Maryland Port Administration, issued a report on June 21 that described the bird’s location and gave some very clear instructions on how birders could seek the bird without disturbing it. Congratulations to the Maryland Port Administration and to Stan and the other birders who have been working to design the wetland and now to properly welcome and protect the BLACK RAIL that arrived to use it.
- Back on April 24 a few lucky birders were treated to views of a SWALLOW-TAILED KITE. Mark Schilling of Queen Anne’s County found and reported this bird as it hunted over some woodlands on Kent Island near the Romancoke Pier. Prompt passing of the message brought several birders to the site to share the sighting. The KITE was first reported at 6:09 AM and was last seen above Kent Island around 1:30 PM (though birders kept searching until dusk). The next morning, April 25, none other than Stan Arnold of Anne Arundel County was out birding the Swan Creek wetland when the KITE flew overhead and quickly disappeared in the direction of Baltimore City. That same day the hawkwatch in Fort Smallwood Park reported a fly-over



Purple Gallinule at Hughes Hollow; photo taken by Evelyn Ralston, Montgomery County.

- SWALLOW-TAILED KITE. All of these sightings quite likely were of the same bird. Eleven days later, on May 6, a SWALLOW-TAILED KITE was reported from Pickering Creek Audubon Center in Talbot County. This bird provided great excitement for a group of school children who were being led on a birding adventure by Pickering Creek staff member Samantha Pitts (who made the report).
- On May 2 another candidate for most fulfilling bird of the summer was reported. This was a PURPLE GALLINULE, discovered in Hughes Hollow in Montgomery County by skilled birder Dave Powell of Germantown. As might be expected, this beautiful bird attracted numerous birders, including many great photographers. The bird was highly cooperative for much of the time so many splendid photos were obtained. Evelyn Ralston of Montgomery County was amongst the first to get some absolutely marvelous pictures. The bird was relocated each day through May 10; heard only on May 10 and 15; and seen again on May 18 and 21. It could not be found after that, despite intense searching. However, on June 2 a PURPLE GALLINULE (possibly the same one) turned up in Calvert County where it caught the sharp eyes of Marcia Ballestri of Frederick County. Several other people managed to find the Calvert County bird over the next few days, with the final report coming from Jim Stasz on June 6.
- On June 2 four BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCKS stopped for a rest in the lovely pond of Patterson Park in downtown Baltimore. They were initially reported by Keith Costley of Randallstown. Their number grew to five on June 3 and stayed at that level through June 6. Most of the time they provided great close-up photo opportunities as they rested on the small islands and rocks of the pond or foraged for food amongst the resident Mallards. By June 9 the numbers had dropped to two; on the morning of June 10 they were gone.
- After an absence of many years, LEAST TERNS were sighted foraging on the Anacostia River this summer. The first report came from Rob Ostrowski of Crofton on July 19. Rob discovered two adult LEAST TERNS at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park in Prince George’s County and immediately predicted that they would move downstream to a DC location. Jason Berry, hoping for a DC sighting, went out looking for them in the heat of the morning of July 20 and was duly rewarded. He found the two TERNS in DC just a small distance upriver from the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge. As a bonus, Jason also was treated to a view of a pair of AMERICAN AVOCETS flying upriver from the same location. Word quickly spread, leading to a small parade DC listers over the next few days, and most of them found success. The number of LEAST TERNS at the site grew to three, and they were still present as of July 23.

MARYLAND/DC RECORDS COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT AS OF JULY 22, 2011

BY PHIL DAVIS, MD/DCRC SECRETARY

The MD/DCRC has reached the following record decisions since the last committee status report was published in *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. This report covers MD/DCRC review packages 133, 134, 135, and 138.

MD/DCRC report numbers are in brackets. These records will be addressed in additional detail in a future issue of *Maryland Birdlife*. New “state” species accepted in these decisions include Brown Booby for Maryland and Painted Bunting for DC. Note that only one of the five submitted Brown Booby reports from July-August 2009 was accepted at this time; the other four reports will be recirculated for additional review. The accepted report [MD/2009-079] was of the bird photographed sitting on the beach at Assateague on 03-Aug-2009.

The Germantown Black-bellied Whistling-Duck from June-July 2006 [MD/2006-042] was previously published as having been accepted in an status earlier report; however, due to a technicality, the review process had not fully completed. The review is now complete and the record is accepted, as was published earlier.

More information on the MD/DCRC can be found on the committee’s web pages at the following URL:

<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/rcindex.html>

MD RECORDS ACCEPTED:

- Eared Grebe**, *Podiceps nigricollis* [MD/2003-230]
Hart-Miller Island, Millers Island, Baltimore County
12-Nov-1989
- Aechmophorus species** [Western/Clark’s Grebe], *Aechmophorus sp.* [MD/2010-001]
Magothy River, Cape St. Claire, Anne Arundel County
03-Jan-2010
- Brown Booby**, *Sula leucogaster* [MD/2009-079]
Assateague Island National Seashore, Berlin, Worcester County
03-Aug-2009
- Anhinga**, *Anhinga anhinga* [MD/2004-017]
St Leonard, Calvert County
16-Apr-2004
- Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, *Dendrocygna autumnalis* [MD/2006-042]
Washingtonian Center, Gaithersburg, Montgomery County
04-Jun-2006 through 01-Jul-2006
- Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, *Dendrocygna autumnalis* [MD/2009-056]
Lake Churchill, Germantown, Montgomery County
30-May-2009
- Tufted Duck**, *Aythya fuligula* [MD/2010-020]
Kent Narrows, Queen Anne’s County
16-Mar-2010 through 31-Mar-2010
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker**, *Picoides borealis* [MD/2009-062]
near the intersection of Rtes 335 and 336, Golden Hill,
Dorchester County
17-Sep-1960

Gray Kingbird, *Tyrannus dominicensis* [MD/2010-099]
Fort McHenry National Monument, Baltimore City,
Baltimore County
09-Jun-2010

Loggerhead Shrike, *Lanius ludovicianus* [MD/2010-003]
Sedgwick Way, Hagerstown, Washington County
11-Jan-2010 through 24-Mar-2010

MD RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:

- Aechmophorus species** [Western/Clark’s Grebe], *Aechmophorus sp.* [MD/2009-088]
Point Lookout State Park, Scotland, Saint Mary’s County
27-Dec-2008
- Yellow-nosed Albatross**, *Thalassarche chlororhynchos* [MD/2009-085—a reopened earlier report]
Assateague Island National Seashore, Berlin, Worcester County
11-May-2000
- Yellow-nosed Albatross**, *Thalassarche chlororhynchos* [MD/2005-051]
Atlantic Ocean, Pelagic Zone, Worcester County
18-Jun-2005
- Anhinga**, *Anhinga anhinga* [MD/2004-152]
Forman’s Branch Bird Observatory, Kingstown,
Queen Anne’s County
12-Apr-1998
- Anhinga**, *Anhinga anhinga* [MD/2005-057]
Forman’s Branch Bird Observatory, Kingstown,
Queen Anne’s County
~17-Sep-2004
- Anhinga**, *Anhinga anhinga* [MD/2005-036]
Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Edgewater,
Anne Arundel County
20-Apr-2005
- Anhinga**, *Anhinga anhinga* [MD/2005-066]
Loch Raven Reservoir, Cockeysville, Baltimore County
09-May-2005
- Magnificent Frigatebird**, *Fregata magnificens* [MD/2008-078]
Observatory Drive, Hagerstown, Washington County
19-Sep-2008
- Wood Stork**, *Mycteria americana* [MD/2009-040]
Woodstock, Howard County
11-Apr-2009
- Tufted Duck**, *Aythya fuligula* [MD/2009-050]
Choptank River, Cambridge, Dorchester County
11-Jan-2009
- Curlew Sandpiper**, *Calidris ferruginea* [MD/2008-068]
Hart-Miller Island, Millers Island, Baltimore County
13-Sep-2008
- Black-chinned Hummingbird**, *Archilochus alexandri* [MD/2009-063]
Bowie, Prince George’s County
~30-May-2009

NOTES FROM THE FIELD: A GRACKLE-PIPER

While observing a small flock of actively feeding sandpipers, I noted unusual behavior of a Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). It was about 6:30 in the evening of May 2, 2010, and the shorebirds were feeding in shallow water along the edge of a narrow, linear storm-water retention pond bounding two-sides of a residential subdivision in north Hurlock, Dorchester County. The dispersed flock of about 40 sandpipers included Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Dunlin (*Tringa flavipes*, *Tringa solitaria*, *Actitis macularius*, *Calidris minutilla*, *Calidris melanotos*, and *Calidris alpina*). A single adult male Common Grackle fed near the edge of the sandpiper flock.

The grackle's feeding behavior directly paralleled that of the sandpipers, i.e., it was constantly wading, sometimes up to its belly, and periodically driving its bill perpendicularly into the water in

pursuit of prey. The grackle's large head frequently made a splash, particularly when it would plunge underwater up to and beyond its eyes. Easily visible in the Grackle's bill before it swallowed was captured prey that appeared to be about 1 to 3 cm long.

Upon close inspection of the shallow pond water, I found the bottom densely cluttered with algae and herbaceous vegetation detritus from which various aquatic organisms would dart from cover to the surface as if needing oxygen. Stirring the algae and detritus with a stick appeared to force more numerous organisms to dart toward the surface or away to undisturbed hiding places. Without a net to capture the prey organisms, I had to rely on repeated disturbance observations plus what I could capture by hand. This frustrating and clumsy approach, however, did affirm that prey organisms included tadpoles, adult Whirligig Beetles (Family *Gyrinidae*), and medium-size dragonfly larvae

(Order *Odonata*, possibly Family *Libellulidae*). Tadpoles with a large mouth and evolving legs and feet suggested an advanced stage of metamorphosis.

One might question:

a) How did a terrestrial-feeding grackle locate an aquatic prey source—serendipitously while pursuing other activities, curious visual attraction to behavior of feeding sandpipers, or independent reasoning?

b) How did the grackle learn to capture aquatic prey—observing and mimicking sandpiper feeding behavior, trial and error, inherent skill, or independent reasoning?

— Jan Reese
Talbot County Bird Club

Noticed some unusual bird behavior lately? Follow Jan Reese's good example and write up the incident for the Yellowthroat.

Records Committee *continued from page 8*

Fork-tailed Flycatcher, *Tyrannus savana* [MD/2008-003]
Chesapeake Avenue, Churchton, Anne Arundel County
16-Oct-2007

Swainson's Warbler, *Limnothlypis swainsonii* [MD/2009-067]
Green Ridge Mountain, Green Ridge, Allegany County
07-Jun-2009

DC RECORDS ACCEPTED:

American Avocet, *Recurvirostra americana* [DC/2010-144]
Anacostia River
06-Aug-2010

American Avocet, *Recurvirostra americana* [DC/2010-143]
Anacostia Park
14-Aug-2010

Whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus* [DC/2010-074]
Hains Point
23-May-2010

Painted Bunting, *Passerina ciris* [DC/2010-056]
Hains Point
15-May-2010



...where credit is due...

The photos that accompanied Karen Morley's article on Cylburn in the May/June issue are the work of Pat Draisey (mansion exterior); Gene Gregoire (museum specimens); Nancy Hill (Dr. David Thorndill's class); Karen Morley (Vollmer Center); Judy Lombardi (birders at Cylburn); and Keith Costley (Trail Tracker photo—with oriole photo by Mark Lindardi). Thanks to them all.

SWAN CREEK/COX CREEK: DESTINATION BIRDING

A Black Rail put the icing on the cake, so to speak. When **Stan Arnold** first heard this rarity on June 10, 2011, the Swan Creek wetland and adjacent Cox Creek dredged material containment facility outside Baltimore had already established itself as a go-to site for birders. Two Black-necked Stilts that had shown up on June 5 were still picking along the muddy dredge spoil ponds in mid-June, a Long-billed Curlew had stopped by for a few hours in May, and a Silt Sandpiper had boosted the 2011 May Count. In the last couple of years the site had hosted several scarce species of shorebird, including Whimbrel and Buff-breasted Sandpiper—as well as White Ibis, Swallow-tailed Kite, and a couple of dozen other regional rarities. And in July 2011, the tally would be upped by Black Skimmers, Baird's Sandpiper, and Marbled Godwit.

A cousin of Hart-Miller Island and Poplar Island, Cox Creek is located on the Patapsco River in far northeastern Anne Arundel County, in the shadow of the Key Bridge, where it is sandwiched between a chemical factory and a power plant. The Cox Creek component consists of two vast gritty dredge spoil cells ringed by dikes busy with heavy equipment, where the Maryland Port Administration deposits sediments dredged from the Baltimore Harbor. The adjacent Swan Creek Tidal Wetlands is a verdant 11-acre oasis, part of more than 100 acres of woodlands and wetlands preserved as open space.



Cox Creek lies on the Patapsco River in the shadow of the Key Bridge.

A gravel road leads from the dredge facility through a patch of woods—itsself a magnet for migrating warblers and sparrows—to the wetlands. There an observation platform overlooks a combination of open water, low marsh, and high marsh, lush with marsh grasses, water lilies, and pickerel weed. Over the past few years more than 300 reef balls have been installed along the shoreline to help reduce wave action and limit erosion, as well as to enhance habitat for fish and other species. Each year additional marsh plants, saltbrush shrubs, and submerged aquatic vegetation have been added to supplement the naturally-occurring plant species.



A "totem" species at the Swan Creek marshes; Little Blue Heron.

This potent Swan Creek/Cox Creek combo has a complex history, and its existence is a testament to a broad cooperative effort by an assortment of government agencies, public institutions, and individual volunteers. **Sue Ricciardi**, who became involved as the site was redeveloped, traces its origins:

"The current Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility was predated by dredge impoundments built there by the Army Corps of Engineers in the mid-1960s. The Army Corps operated the site through 1984, when it was essentially abandoned. The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) then purchased the site and some surrounding property in the 1990s and began to reactivate the facility, which is now accepting more dredge spoil.



Do you hear what I hear? Check out photographer Bill Hubick's audio link of the Black Rail (<http://www.billhubick.com/audioFiles.php>) calling at this very spot at this very minute.

"At the same time, at the request of Lewis Bellinger, Mary Rosso, and other community leaders, MPA agreed to preserve more than 100 acres of the property's woodlands and wetlands, known as Swan Creek, as open space. MPA contacted the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET)) to explore placing a conservation easement on the acreage. However, MET was barred by state law from holding a conservation easement on land owned by another state agency unless a non-governmental organization could be found to co-hold the easement. That's when community leaders Marcia Drenzyk and Rebecca Kolberg came to the rescue and, with the assistance of MET's Local Land Trust Coordinator Nick Williams, solved the problem by forming the all-volunteer, non-profit North County Land Trust (NCLT). The conservation easement on the preserved property was completed in 2002 and is co-held by MET and NCLT.

"In addition, MPA was required to perform wetlands mitigation due to disturbance of some wetland habitat during renovation activities. Thus was created the 11.13-acre Swan Creek Tidal Wetland, adjacent to the impoundments and to the property protected by the conservation easement. The National Aquarium in Baltimore was asked to play a major role in the mitigation project, which

involved using community and student volunteers. With partner NCLT, over 14,000 units of wetland plantings were installed."

Over the years, a few birders had been visiting the abandoned impoundments. **Bob Ringler** first saw the site with Rick Blom while atlasing on July 4, 1985. "We were pleased to find downy young Pied-billed Grebes and moorhens, a summering male Lesser Scaup, and three fall migrant Least Sandpipers. (This seems reminiscent of birds there this summer.) In those days the large building along Kembo Road was a huge electroplating facility for Kennecott Copper. We would walk along the fence bordering the property to get to the wetlands that are now occupied by the current impoundments. . . . On July 4, 1986 I found nesting Pied-billed Grebes and moorhens again. Additional birds were two Black-crowned Night-Herons and a Glossy Ibis with two Lesser Yellowlegs for fall migrants. . . . I also went there on December 7, 1985 to see what non-breeders were around; highlights that day were an estimated 8,000 Ruddy Ducks, a very late moorhen, about 135 coots, and some Tree Sparrows."



A Long-billed Curlew visited Cox Creek on May 23, 2011.

Sue Ricciardi herself had been on the site once or twice and requested permission from Anne Arundel County to obtain formal access to the property about the time MPA purchased it, as a favor for her completing some bird surveys for the County. A visit in July of 1996 with Hal Wierenga revealed Common Moorhens and Least Bitterns with young, and probable nesting of Pied-billed Grebe

and Marsh Wren; they saw more than 25 Marsh Wrens and heard a Virginia Rail. Subsequent to that, MPA allowed Sue and Pete Webb to visit for the 1998 Baltimore Harbor Christmas Count. "Northern Shovelers, Virginia Rails, American Coots, Marsh Wrens, and a Northern Harrier were the highlights," Sue recalls.

Sometime in 2000, Sue and Rebecca Kolberg met, and a plan was drawn up for Sue to conduct a breeding bird survey for NCLT in spring 2001 on what was to become the land trust property. However, for safety reasons MPA was reluctant to allow visitors until the site was cleaned up. She was finally granted one visit in June 2001. "Notable finds were Little Blue Heron, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Least Tern, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Field Sparrow." Fortunately, in spring 2002, MPA permitted the NCLT survey to resume, by which time Maryland's second Breeding Bird Atlas Project had also begun.

"In the second half of 2002," Sue writes, "the conservation easement was finally completed and, in addition, a decision was made to monitor the wetland mitigation area for birdlife." Through MPA and the Aquarium, a formal monitoring process was put into place and in October 2003, Sue and Jim Peters began regular surveys of the mitigated wetland area. They also surveyed the birdlife in other portions of the MPA site, including the land trust property. Matt Grey became interested in the Swan Creek area in 2005 and, when Jim Peters ended his participation, Matt took his place." Adds Stan Arnold, "Matt Grey is the one who put Swan Creek on the map for the birding community, by posting his sightings back in 2007 and 2008."

Stan made his first visit in August 2008, promptly discovered an American Avocet, and became enamored with the site; he lives nearby and began visiting regularly. He was joined the following year by Ed Carlson. Stan has made more than 200 visits, Ed has made more than half that many, and they have recently been joined by Bill Hubick to provide

almost daily coverage during prime shorebird migration (July-August). Sue keeps the data in a spreadsheet form; Stan, Ed, and Bill submit the information to eBird. Sue also makes a yearly report to the Aquarium, NCLT, and the Maryland Environmental Service (MES), which is the MPA's operations contractor.

"To the credit of all involved, a most cooperative relationship exists among the surveyors, MES, and MPA," Sue points out. "This will bode well for the future as the site continues to evolve into a first-rate birding venue."



The dredge spoil cells at Cox Creek prove irresistible to migrating shorebirds.

LOGISTICS

HOURS. Swan Creek is open on weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Do not try to arrange visitation outside of these times. Sometimes the gates open before 7:30, and you can drive in if the gates are opened. Plan on being in your car and leaving at 3:30 p.m.

DIRECTIONS, per Stan Arnold: Swan Creek is off Fort Smallwood Road (Rte 173), near the Key Bridge. To get to the facility from Baltimore and points west, take the last exit off the I-695 beltway prior to the Key Bridge, onto Hawkins Point Rd, and turn left on Fort Smallwood Rd. Pass the stoplight at Pitman Road and take the next left, onto Kembo Road. Drive to the end of Kembo Road, through two gates, and park at the end of the fence to the right, just prior to the flagpole.

PROCEDURES. All visitors **MUST** check in at the office/trailer on the left each time they visit, and sign the visitor log that is just inside the door. On your first visit, you will need to fill out a waiver. The people there are very friendly and welcome birders. If you have questions, you can call them directly at 410-439-4990.

The north and south dredge cells lie directly ahead of where you parked. You can scan these via scope, standing in the area near the flagpole; do not wander onto the dikes. To get to the wetlands, follow the lower road past the south cell.

The Maryland Yellowthroat: Futures

This issue launches my ninth year as editor of *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. It's been a great run, my MOS pals, and great fun, but *Yellowthroat* designer Sue Probst and I are ready to hand over the reins to a new team, full of fresh ideas and fresh enthusiasm. Sue and I are prepared to continue through the May issue, and to offer assistance and counsel through the transition, but it is time for new volunteers to step forward. I am pleased to reassure the newcomers that stalwarts of the *Yellowthroat* team—Andy Martin who compiles the Calendar, Jean Wheeler who confects Chapter Chatter, Les Roslund who rounds up Birds of Note, and Helen Horrocks who manages the mailing lists—are prepared to stay on.

Editing the *Yellowthroat* provides a unique perch for observing and chronicling the activities of the MOS and its more, and/or less, colorful members—and for focusing the membership's attention on issues of import and interest. I highly recommend these posts to persons with a bent for stories and words and an eye for imaginative design. If this strikes a spark with you, please get in touch with MOS President Mark Johnson (president@mdbirds.org), Communications Director Janet Millenson (janet@twocrows.com), Sue Probst (msprobst2@verizon.net), or me (LydiaSchindler@verizon.net).

THE ORIGINAL "MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT": A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Most MOS members associate the name "Maryland Yellowthroat" with a particular subspecies of the Common Yellowthroat. And for a period of time (from the late 18th to the early 20th century) it was used to designate the entire species. But there is more to the story, as recently described in the *Archives of Natural History* by Dr. Storrs Olson of the Smithsonian Institution. Here goes:

In the twelfth edition of his *Systema naturae* (1766), Linnaeus gave the name *Turdus trichas* to the bird we now know as Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*). Linnaeus used three sources in naming the species—publications by James Petiver (1702), George Edwards (1758), and M. J. Brisson (1760). The most important of these was Edwards' description and illustration in his book, *Gleanings of natural history*. The bird in Edwards' excellent illustration clearly shows features that are indeed consistent with the Common Yellowthroat.

Edwards gave the bird the name "Mary-Land Yellow-Throat" because he believed it to be the same species as that described and illustrated by Petiver in his 1702 book.

Petiver was a British apothecary who amassed a large natural history collection, which included a warbler collected in Maryland by Reverend Hugh Jones. Although Petiver's specimen is long gone, Dr. Olson recently tracked down and studied Petiver's illustration and found it to have features much more consistent with Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*) than with *Geothlypis trichas*. These include a distinct superciliary line, a black mask extending from the eye posteriorly to a point, and a number of black feathers along the sides of the breast. Although a few authors in the late 1700s referred to *Geothlypis trichas* as "Yellow-breasted Warbler" (which makes sense considering that the breast as well as throat is yellow), the name Maryland Yellow-throat stuck and was used by the American

Ornithologists' Union from 1886 (in its first checklist) until 1953, when AOU no longer gave English names to subspecies.

So, although the name Maryland Yellowthroat has, since 1758, been applied to the bird we now know as the Common Yellowthroat, the first use of that term was actually for the bird we now call the Yellow-throated Warbler.

— Ellen Lawler
Tri-County Bird Club

If you'd like to read the complete story and see Edwards' and Petiver's illustrations, I can forward you an electronic version of Dr. Olson's paper, "James Petiver's "Mary-Land Yellow-Throat"—A bird misidentified through four centuries" from the *Archives of Natural History*, Volume 37, Part 2, pg. 221- 226, 2010. Just e-mail me at emlawler@salisbury.edu.

CATOCTIN CREEK PARK AND NATURE CENTER: NEW IN FREDERICK COUNTY

Frederick County has a new nature park, and the Frederick County Bird Club helped launch it at the park's first NATURE FEST on Saturday, April 9. The day-long festival included bird, forestry, and general nature walks; native shrub planting; a raptor and rehab presentation; and "critter exhibits", including live turtles, lizards, snakes, toads, spiders, and salamanders. Exhibitors educated participants on everything from beekeeping to astronomy, from bluebird box building to recycling, from native plant and garden design to fly-fishing. The Frederick Bird Club provided bird quizzes for all levels, bird coloring sheets for little ones, handouts on feeding tips and bird-friendly gardening, and general information on MOS and the Frederick Bird Club.



Catoctin Creek's new nature center is a green building with many eco-friendly elements.

Catoctin Creek Park encompasses 139 acres of nature trails, wildflowers, old barn ruins, and forest. The focus of the park is environmental education, as evidenced by staff-led educational programs and recreational activities. Canoe trips, naturalist-led nature hikes, and bird walks are some of the outdoor activities planned. The varied habitats, including Catoctin Creek, promise to be a boon to birders.

Construction began on the \$3.8 million, 6,084-square-foot nature center in November 2009, and the ribbon-cutting ceremony was held



Volunteers at the MOS table at the park's opening were, seated (L to R), Russ Johnson, Mike Welch, and Kathy Calvert, and standing, Marcia Balestri and Tom Humphrey.

on February 17 of this year. Program Open Space provided about \$178,000, with the rest of the funding coming from Frederick County. The nature center, built of glass and locally quarried stone, is a "green" building with many eco-friendly elements. The heating and cooling systems are geothermal, supplemented with passive solar heating. A large south-facing front window soaks in the sun's rays in the winter, but in the summer, shade trees will prevent much of the bright sunlight from heating up the space. The living roof, which has a walkway so groups can see it, is also expected to host astronomy gatherings and hawk migration watchers.

A flagstone patio allows visitors to watch birds at the feeders that surround the Nature Center and view the expanse of the park as it slopes toward Catoctin Creek. Beyond the patio is a fossil playground where children can dig in the sand for fossils and walk across a rope bridge. The stone ruins of a barn, evocative of the park's former life as a farm, serves as the backdrop for campfires.

A trail leads through a meadow to the river. Volunteers have planted the meadow with colorful wildflowers, with equally colorful names. Joe-Pye weed, cardinal flower, New York ironweed, swamp milkweed, and blue vervain are currently flourishing throughout the park.

A paved, handicapped-accessible path also meanders through habitat for toads, turtles, snakes, birds, and foxes. Although most of these aren't likely to be seen easily, visitors may encounter these animals during the morning and late afternoon when the park is quiet.

The park is located at 2929 Sumantown Road, Middletown, MD 21769. Info about the park (including directions) is at <http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/index.aspx?NID=4069>. There is also a really nice blog spot at <http://catoctincreek.blogspot.com/>.

— Marcia Balestri
Frederick Bird Club

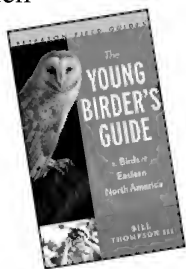


YMOS SUMMER PROGRAM FLOURISHES

This past June a group of students and teachers from across the state met at Washington College for the second annual Maryland Birds and Habitats summer workshop. In addition to a wide variety of field activities, the five teachers and eight students, representing seven counties (Charles, Montgomery, Carroll, Baltimore, Harford, Baltimore City, and Queen Anne's), learned how to collect and report data on eBird. The program will be repeated Jun 24-29, 2012. Detailed program information as well as application forms are posted on the YMOS web page.

YMOS Backpacks Are Back

Youth backpacks will be distributed to each chapter again this year. Each pack will contain a pair of Eagle Optics Triumph 8 x 42 binoculars, Bill Thompson's *Young Birder's Guide*, the MOS "yellow book," *Birds of Maryland*, and a lens pen.



Each chapter is asked to add a new or used field guide to the pack.

Many of the chapters have devised their own methods for choosing a youngster who deserves the backpack. These include having youth submit a birding list for a period of time and keeping a birding journal with descriptions and drawings.

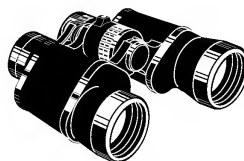
The packs will be given to each chapter at the September 10 Board Meeting.

Check Out the YMOS Web Site (www.ymos.org)

The YMOS web site is designed for both young birders and any adults who work with youth. The site contains birding basics, data sources, useful links, trip and program information, a how to use eBird section, World Series of Birding information, summer program information, and educator resources. This is a great site for anyone new to the world of birding.

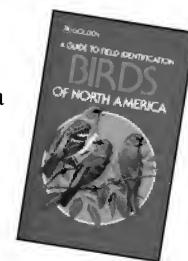
YMOS Birding Trips Plus the World Series of Birding

YMOS runs trips throughout the year for interested youth. Each chapter offers trips that young people can participate in, but the YMOS trips provide an opportunity for youth from different chapters to meet and learn together. The trip dates are



found on the YMOS web page. The trips will also be used to identify and prepare youth teams for the 2012 World Series of Birding in Cape May.

Each chapter should actively search for young people in its area who have a particular interest in birds. Get them out on a trip with your chapter, direct them to the YMOS web site, get them out on a YMOS trip, and direct them to George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com if they would be interested in participating on a World Series of Birding team. This coming year we want to field both middle and high school teams. Experience is not necessary; love of the natural world is.



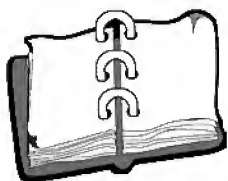
—George Radcliffe
radclifg@gmail.com

Book Review *continued from page 24*

My flycatcher's cup nest may be the most widespread and common type, and domed nests and other types have their charms, but I have to confess a fondness for the hanging, woven, and stitched nests, such as those made by our own Baltimore orioles, the oropendolas of Latin America, and the weaver birds of Africa. These are "the most sublime expression of nest-building skill," in Goodfellow's words. Using fresh, flexible fibers, the birds knot, twine, and weave the materials around supports, creating a pensile nest with an entrance into a central chamber. The blueprint drawings for these nests show their remarkable construction and adaptability.

The introduction to *Avian Architecture* speculates that just as male bower builders build more effective bowers after years of practice, perhaps experienced birds make better nests than first-timers. So next year, my Acadian Flycatcher, in what may be her second year of sexual maturity, may build a more typical nest and fledge more youngsters. If only she could see this book!

—Cecily Nabors
Montgomery Bird Club



MOS Calendar

September-October 2011

Thursday, September 1

MEETING. Frederick. Our kick-off meeting for the year will feature *Gary Van Velsir* and his program on "Birding Europe's Low Countries." 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Friday, September 2

Frederick. First Fridays. Show up at 8 AM at Culler Lake in Baker Park to join this half-day trip to a "leader's choice" destination. For info contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Saturday, September 3

Cecil. Turkey Point Migrants and Hawk Watch Kick-off. Join us for the traditional launch of the annual Turkey Point Hawk Watch, which runs every day from Labor Day weekend through Thanksgiving. Plus, a walk through the woods and fields for migrant songbirds. Be prepared for a round-trip hike to the Point, a distance of about two miles. The pace will be leisurely. Most of the walking is on a gravel road with good footing, but there are hilly sections. Wear comfortable walking shoes/boots. Bring drinks and/or snacks. Meet 7 AM at the Turkey Point parking lot. Trip leader: Sean "Bird Dog" McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

ANNUAL FALL PICNIC/SOCIAL. Harford. Starting at 1 PM at the Eden Mill pavilion. Join fellow club members for a delicious cookout featuring fantastic pit beef and other grilled meats. If you wish, bring a favorite dish to be shared. Food will be served starting at 2 PM.

There will be a short bird walk along Deer Creek to work off a few calories.

Howard. Butterflies through Binoculars. Lake Elkhorn Powerline Vegetation Management Study Tract. Meet 9:30 AM at Elkhorn Garden Plots, Oakland Mills Rd opposite Dasher Ct. Enjoy searching for late-summer butterflies and receive expert instruction on their identification. Easy walking. Bring close-focus binoculars to view nectaring behavior. Dick will also use net and jars to provide brief close-up examinations. Cancelled if raining or overcast. Rustic facilities. Leader: Dick Smith, 410-997-7439.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Washington. Blandy Farms and Sky Meadows SP, VA. Join naturalist Margaret Wester for a walk at Blandy Experimental Farm and visit the Red-headed Woodpecker colony at nearby Sky Meadows SP. Trip departs promptly at 6:45 AM from the MVA parking lot in Hagerstown. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 to register, and remember to pack a lunch for this all-day trip.

Sunday, September 4

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Indicates Field Trip

Howard. Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. Meet 7:30 AM at the Clegg Meadow off Southwind Circle, Columbia. Moderate walking through wooded trails and along the river. Great area for migrants of all species. Field edges and thickets provide sparrow habitat. If time and birds warrant, we will also do the Trotter Rd Loop. Prepare for wet grass and mud on the trails. No facilities. Leader: Joe Hanfman, auk1844@comcast.net or 410-772-8424.

Talbot. Black Walnut Point. Leader: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM or 7 AM from St. Michael's Village Shopping Center.

Tuesday, September 6

Baltimore. Cromwell Park. First in a series of casual fall walks to follow the progress of migration. Beginning birders welcome. The park has a variety of habitats, including fields, streamside woods, and hillside forest. Expect a variety of migrant and resident birds. Meet 8:30 AM. Directions: At the Willow Grove Farm Entrance, follow road, cross a small bridge, and park in lot on left. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or dterry12@verizon.net.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. "A Snapshot of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas—Going Digital" with *George Jett*. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks; show starts about 7:15 PM. Note: Meeting cancelled if Balt. City schools are closed that day. When in doubt, check with lecture chairman Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, September 7

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. First in a series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Calendar *continued from page 15*

Baltimore. Evening Walk at Fort McHenry. First in a series of evening bird walks at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Park and meet 6 PM outside the gate on Wallace St. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

MEETING. Carroll. "The Amazing Breeding Biology of North American Birds" by *Paul Baicich*. 7:30 PM at the S Carroll Senior Center, 5928 Mineral Hill Rd, Eldersburg. Contact Dave Harvey at 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. Cecil. Program and speaker TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James Street, Elkton. For more info, contact President Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Meet 7:30 AM to bird some of the trails of Little Bennett for migrant and resident birds. Expect to walk 2-3 miles on gravel and dirt trails, with some uphill. Beginners welcome! Reservations required. Limit: 8. For reservations and directions, contact the leader: Claire Wolfe, 301-972-4278 or c_wolfe2003@yahoo.com.

Thursday, September 8

MEETING. Howard. "National Wildlife Refuges: Great Birding Made Even Better," by *Paul Baicich*. Paul will explain the role of refuges in bird conservation history, show some of the "most-wanted" birds found on refuges, and give examples of how our refuges strive to become better birding destinations. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

MEETING. Talbot. 7 PM William Hill Manor Auditorium. Speaker TBA.

Saturday, September 10

MOS BOARD MEETING. 10 AM. Hosted by the Baltimore Bird Club at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave, Baltimore. For more information, contact Janet Shields, MOS Secretary, at janetbill@prodigy.net.

Baltimore. Milford Mill Park. Fall migrant warblers, thrushes, and other songbirds at this small tract of forest and streamside path. One-mile level paved walking loop. Puddles could cover parts of the path if it's rained recently. Meet 7:30 AM in small parking lot near overhead bridge. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com

Baltimore. Youth Birding at Soldiers Delight NEA. Ages 8-15 with parent. Learn how to use field guides and iPod apps to locate birds. Meet 8:30 AM. Reservations required. Contact: Marty Brazeau, 410-583-0275 or tropicbirder@verizon.net.

Howard. Rockburn Branch Park. Meet 8 AM in parking lot on the left just past the restored schoolhouse. The park gate is just beyond Rockburn ES. Moderate walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park looking for migrants. Paths may be muddy. Facilities available. Leaders: Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com.

Montgomery. Assateague Island/Coastal Worcester. Full day (to dusk). Bring food, water, sunscreen, insect repellent. Focus will be migrant warblers, shorebirds, and rarities such as Lark Sparrow. Reservations required. Limit: 14. Co-leaders: Bill Hubick and Jim Brighton. For reservations and directions, contact Bill Hubick at bill_hubick@yahoo.com.

Sunday, September 11

PICNIC. Allegany/Garrett. 1 PM at Carey Run Sanctuary. For info, contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com.

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for waterfowl, raptors, passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek.

Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 9 AM. Leaders: Bob Rineer, 410-252-6408 or rrineer1@jhmi.edu, and Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Baltimore. Chimney Swifts at Dusk. Join the BBC Swift-Watch Team for "Swift Night Out" as Chimney Swifts pour into one of their favorite chimneys. The swifts occasionally switch nightly roosting sites, so please check the BBC web site (<http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>) on the Fri before the walk to confirm location and get directions. Meet 7 PM. Come a half-hour early if the weather is cloudy or gray; cancelled if raining. Leader: Joan Cwi, 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

Caroline. Camp Todd. Meet at the camp at 8 AM. Leader: Debby Bennett, dabennett1996@gmail. Take 404 east just past Denton to 16 W then turn left on Beauchamp Branch Rd.

Montgomery. Pennyfield to Violette's Bird Stalk. Half day. For folks who prefer a somewhat later start, we will meet at 9 AM at Violette's Lock parking lot, carpool down to Pennyfield Lock, and then walk back up the C&O Canal towpath to Violette's. This trip should net an interesting mix of late warblers, landbird migrants, and probably a few first-show winter visitors; we'll scan the skies and river for raptors and waterbirds. For reservations, contact leader Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net or 301-530-6574.

Talbot. Chino Farms, banding station. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM or meet leader near Chestertown at Royal Farms store at Rtes 213/544 at 7:10 AM. Sign up in advance with Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651.

Tuesday, September 13

MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. Donnelle Keech will discuss "Forest Habitat Conservation in Western MD and the Central Appalachians." 7 PM in Rm 327 Compton Hall, Frostburg State U., Frostburg.

Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or dterry12@verizon.net.

Wednesday, September 14

Baltimore. Evening Walk at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of evening bird walks at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Park and meet 6 PM outside the gate on Wallace St. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. Urban birding at its best. One-third day. Migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area 18 (on Ridge Rd, half mile below the Nature Center). Reservations required. For reservations and directions, call Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

MEETING. Montgomery. "A Year on the Road with North American Birds." During a Lower 48 "Big Year" in 2005, *Ron Gutberlet* visited all 48 of those states. It was quite a year, and Ron looks forward to sharing a bit of it. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Anna Urciolo at urcioloa@sidwell.edu.

Thursday, September 15

MEETING. Caroline. "Poplar Island" presented by *Laura Baldwin* and *Beth Kivela* of the MD Environmental Service. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Library, 100 Market St, Denton. Info: Debby Bennett, dabennett1996@gmail.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Saturday, September 17

FALL COUNT. Anne Arundel. Contact Kathie Lambert, kbert59@yahoo.com, to let her know where you will be counting.

FALL COUNT. Baltimore. We will tally all birds seen within the City and County during this calendar day. Birders of all levels of experience are welcome and urged to participate. To avoid duplication of counting, contact compiler Joel Martin, 410-744-9211 or jcdlmartin@aol.com, for assignment.

FALL COUNT. Caroline. If you would like to participate, please contact Debby Bennett at dabennett1996@gmail.com.

FALL COUNT. Carroll. Parties of counters will set their own schedules in their pre-arranged areas, to count resident and late migrant bird species throughout the County. Tally Rally will be hosted by Dave and Maureen Harvey. To verify your bird counting area, contact Bill Ellis at billemis@ellislist.com or 443-520-8809. If you will be attending the Tally, please notify Maureen Harvey to co-ordinate your contribution, either a cash donation or a food item.

FALL COUNT. Cecil. Hawk Watch at Turkey Pt. For info or to help, contact, Pat Valdata at 410-398-2603 or pvaldata@zoominternet.net. Rain date, Sun Sep 18.

FALL COUNT. Dorchester. Contact Harry Armistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com or 215-248-4120.

FALL COUNT. Frederick. Join our 12th county-wide fall census; you never know what might be passing through. All eyes and ears are welcome! Tally rally afterwards at Mike and Donna Welch's house. Compiler: Mike Welch, 301-685-3561.

FALL COUNT. Harford: Rick Cheicante, Bel Air, MD, 410-803-2712 or rickcheicante@cs.com.

FALL COUNT. Howard. Compilers: Mike McClure, 410-531-2780 or Michael.McClure@jhuapl.edu and Chuck Stirrat.

FALL COUNT. Washington. Contact Doris Berger at 301-739-8907 to participate.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mike Hudson, 443-955-1797.

Baltimore. Youth Birding at Cromwell Valley Park. Ages 8-15 with parent. Learn how to use field guides and iPod apps to locate birds. Reservations required; contact Marty Brazeau, 410-583-0275 or tropicbirder@verizon.net.

Montgomery. Snickers Gap, VA. Trail Walk and Hawk Watch. Two-thirds day. Joint trip with ANS. Meet place/time: 8 AM at commuter parking lot at VA Rtes 7 and 601. (9:30 AM meet time for raptors.) Make reservation with leaders Joan Boudreau and Bob Abrams, 703-734-1238. Bring scopes, chairs, lunch, and rain/wind gear.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Sunday, September 18

FALL COUNT. Allegany/Garrett. Chuck Hager is the compiler for the 20th annual Fall Count. Contact Chuck at 301-689-5344 or drhager@mindspring.com for area assignments. Tally will be held at Mary Huebner's home. Bring a salad or dessert to share; main dish (chili) will be provided.

FALL COUNT. Kent. Compiler: Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

FALL COUNT. Prince George's. Compiler: Dave Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375, mozurk@bellAtlantic.net.

Calendar continued from page 17

H Anne Arundel. Hawk Mountain, PA. All-day trip. Breakfast on the way, lunch on the mountain. Meet 5:30 AM at Jones Station Rd P&R. Call leader George Thomas, 410-647-5082 or glt553@verizon.net, for more info.

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Montgomery. Lois Green Conservation Park. Half day. Migrant/resident songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl are possible. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot on 8621 Snouffer School Rd, Gaithersburg. Reservations required. For detailed directions and reservations, call Leader Mark England, 240-207-3132 (h) or 240-375-4500 (m).

H Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. One-third day. We've expanded our urban bird walks to include those who can meet only on weekends. Same great birds: migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows. 6:45 AM at Picnic Area 18 (on Ridge Rd, half-mile below Nature Center). (Note the earlier meeting time, necessary to secure a parking spot.) Reservations required. For reservations and directions, call Leader Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

H Talbot. Annual fall excursion to Chincoteague Island and NWR for Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, variety of gulls, terns, Peregrine Falcon, good numbers of herons and egrets. This is a good time for vagrant White Ibis. Also on lookout for a good crab cake. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM. Bring drinks, insecticide. Bring lunch if you wish; we will also stop at McDonalds at lunchtime and a local restaurant for dinner.

Tuesday, September 20

H Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: Ron Davis, 821-1297 or 2athigh1@verizon.net.

Wednesday, September 21

H Harford. Falling Branch Road. One of Harford's most pristine streams, Falling Branch, will be explored on foot with a view of the falls at the end. Expect lots of migrant songbirds and raptors. The leader is Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verizon.net. Meet in the lower parking lot of Eden Mill Nature Center at 7:30 AM.

H Howard. Henryton Road, Patapsco Valley SP. Meet 8 AM at bottom of Henryton Rd at the dead end. Walk along the Patapsco River looking for fall migrants. Mature woodlands provide excellent habitat for migrant thrushes. This is prime migration time and many species of forest birds expected. Plan for moderate walking and possibly muddy trails areas. No facilities. Leader: Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329, LBRoller@verizon.net.

Thursday-Friday, September 22-23

H Washington. Dolly Sods, WV. Bird the beautiful Canaan Valley NWR area and visit the Allegheny Front Migratory Observatory, the fall banding station at Dolly Sods. Overnight accommodations on your own. Contact George Warrick, 301-799-9059, for details and to register.

Saturday, September 24

H Baltimore. Patterson Park. Join Mike Hudson and other youth birders and catch fall migration at this Balt City park. This event is a regularly scheduled bird walk open to the public. Some nice warblers have been known to stop here during migration. Meet 8 AM near the White House. Leader: Dave Curson, 410-675-4963 or dcurson@audubon.org.

H Carroll. Fort Smallwood. A prime hawk-watching area that is nearby. Meet at 7:30 AM at P&R on Rte 32 north of I-70. For info, contact leader Bob Ringler at 410-303-2792.

H Frederick. Gambrill SP. An excellent location for migrating fall warblers. Leader: Lois Kauffman, 301-845-6690.

H Indicates Field Trip

H Howard. Western RP. Meet 8 AM at Carr's Mill Rd lot. Moderate walking along field edges and woodland trails. Opportunity for warblers, sparrows, thrushes, and flyovers. Small pond may host shorebirds. Facilities available. Leader: Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net or 410-461-3361.

H Montgomery. Patuxent River Park, Jug Bay NA. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Driftboat on Patuxent River followed by trail walk. Search for Sora, also migrant and resident songbirds and waterbirds. Meet 7 AM at park entrance gate. Bring fee of \$5/person for park program. Boat trip can be cool and a bit damp. Leaders: Greg Kearns and John Bjerke. Limit: 15. For reservations, contact John Bjerke at 240-401-1643.

H Washington. Shepherd's Spring. Trip departs promptly at 7 AM from the MVA parking lot in Hagerstown for this half-day trip. Shepherd's Spring offers a wonderful mix of woodland and meadow near the river. Call Linda Field at 301-797-6189 to participate.

Saturday-Sunday, September 24-25

H Talbot. Kiptopeke SP, VA. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742. Participants make their own overnight reservations. Leave Easton Acme parking lot on Sat, Sep 24 at 7 AM. Add'l info to follow via club listserver.

Sunday, September 25

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Caroline. Bird-banding Observation in Chestertown with Jim Gruber, Bander. 8 AM. Great for kids. Adults welcome, too. To register and for directions, contact Danny Poet at 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com.

H Harford. Swan Harbor Farm Park. This Harford Co gem has developed into a fine location for a broad spectrum of bird life, including waterfowl, marsh specialties, raptors, and sparrows. Meet at 7:30 AM at the parking lot adjacent to the Agricultural Education Center (near end of driveway). Contact the leader, Dave Webb, 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net, for add'l info.

H Montgomery. Upper Watts Branch Park. Half day. Migrant warblers, vireos, thrushes, and assorted woodland residents. Meet 8 AM at corner of Princeton Pl and Fordham St, Rockville. Reservations required. Limit: 12. Leader: Paul O'Brien, 301-424-6491.

Tuesday, September 27

H Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: John Landers, 410-426-3374 or dado1bw@aol.com.

MEETING. **Washington.** Mt. Aetna Nature Center, 7 PM. Note that this is a new and earlier starting time. *Dave Weesner* will present "Fall Hawk Migration." Call 301-797-8454 for info.

Saturday, October 1

H Anne Arundel. Patuxent River Romp. Dan Haas, nervousbirds@gmail.com, will lead a trip to various sites along the Patuxent River. The trip will go wherever the birds are being sighted. Half day of birding for some; all day for the diehards! Meet 7 AM at Parole P&R.

H Baltimore. YMOS Cape May Hawk Watching. Join young birders on an early-morning, all-day, intensive birding experience. More info at <http://www.ymos.org>. To register for the trip, contact George Radcliffe at radcliff@gmail.com.

H Baltimore. Masonville Cove. Half-day trip to new nature park in urban area, not yet open to public. For present, access will be around back deck of education center, along a boardwalk and paved road, down to a pond. Habitat includes woods,

marsh, overgrown impoundments, and an open cove attractive to waterfowl. Good variety of birds not easily found elsewhere in the urban area. Meet 8 AM. Contact leaders, Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com, and Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com, for directions to carpool location.

H Caroline. Tuckahoe SP (Tuckahoe Creek IBA). Leader: Danny Poet. Meet at the Lakeside Trail parking lot near the lake at 7:30 AM. Dress comfortably and bring binoculars if you have them. Questions, contact Danny Poet at 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com.

H Harford. Eden Mill Park. A bird-banding demonstration will be followed by a walk along Deer Creek to enjoy the bird-rich habitats of this area. This trip is especially attractive for beginners and children. Expect warblers, kingfishers, and Wood Ducks. Meet at the banding station on Eden Mill Rd at 8 AM. Leaders are Les Eastman, 410-734-6969 or les@birdtreks.com, Sue Procell, 410-676-6602 or procell1@comcast.net, and Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978 or mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil.

H Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Everyone welcome but we'll target new birders and focus on some birding basics. Join us for a slow-paced walk, listening for and observing common species. Late warblers and vireos, early sparrows, and some raptors possible. Limit: 8. For reservations, time, and meeting place, contact the leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

H Washington. Washington Monument Hawk Watch. Meet at the monument around 9:30 AM for a morning of hawk-watching. Call Doris Berger, 301-739-8907, for info.

Sunday, October 2

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome.

No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Talbot. Taylor's Island. Say goodbye to the last of summer's resident songbirds at a potential migrant trap on Chesapeake Bay. Lunch in Cambridge. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Tuesday, October 4

H Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. "Birding Southern Spain" with *Dave Harvey*. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks; show starts about 7:15 PM. Note: Meeting cancelled if Balt. City schools are closed that day for bad weather. When in doubt, check with lecture chairman Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

H Howard. Bon Secours Spiritual Center. Meet 8 AM at visitor parking lot. Easy walking through the grounds of this spiritual retreat. Woods, fields, and hedgerows provide opportunities for a variety of birds. Facilities available. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057 or WrightM_29067@msn.com.

Wednesday, October 5

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Wild Orchids" by *Gary Van Velsir*. 7:30 PM at the S Carroll Senior Center, 5928 Mineral Hill Rd, Eldersburg. Contact Dave Harvey at 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program and Speaker TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton. For more info, contact

Calendar continued from page 19

President Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

Thursday, October 6

MEETING. **Frederick.** Dave Ziolkowski will present "Trailside Nature: Things to Pique a Birder's Interest When the Pickins 're Slim." 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Friday, October 7

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Peregrine Falcons: The Saga of Recovery" by Art McMorris. 8 PM Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

Frederick. First Fridays. Leader and destination TBA. Meet at Culler Lake in Baker Park at 8 AM. For info, contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Montgomery. Western Montgomery County Mixed Bag. Half-day trip looking for sparrows (targeting Clay-colored and Nelson's), late warblers, and who knows what else. Meet at 7:30 AM at Lois Green Conservation Park. Plan on doing some walking through wet grass in several locations throughout the county. No reservations needed. For directions and further info, call the Leader, Dave Powell, 301-540-8776.

Friday-Sunday, October 7-9

Anne Arundel. Chincoteague, Kiptopeke, and Eastern Shore of VA. Fisherman's Island and Chesapeake Bay Bridge/Tunnel for shorebirds, migrants, and banding. Meet 8 AM at Bay 50 Shopping Center. Contact leader Peter Hanan, 301-912-3805, by Oct 1.

Saturday, October 8

Allegany/Garrett. Town Hill. Meet Ray Kiddy to watch for migrating hawks at a time of year when there is still good hawk diversity but also when, with favorable weather conditions, we have a better chance for some more interesting birds like Golden Eagles. Meet 7:30 AM at the Mason's Barn P&R, Exit 46 East Cumberland from I-68. Bring lunch and a drink. Call Ray at 301-729-1972 for info and to make a reservation.

Baltimore. Irvine Nature Center. With forest, field, and marsh, this 116-acre site has an extensive trail system and is full of promises. Expect between 45 and 55 species with plenty of "little brown jobs." Possible Red-headed Woodpecker. Meet 9 AM at the center. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center Youth Birder Canoe Trip. Learn about aquatic birds at this eastern Balt Co marsh. (If just a few young birders sign up, the trip will open to all members.) \$7 fee/person. Pre-registration and payment required two weeks before the trip. Youth and parent registration by Sep 14, general public registration Sep 15-20. Meet 10 AM at Nature Center parking lot. Register with Marty Brazeau, 410-583-0275 or tropicbirder@verizon.net.

Frederick/Montgomery. Lilypons. Joint Frederick-Montgomery bird club trip to popular birding hotspot. We'll look for American Bittern, Lincoln's and Nelson's Sparrows, and other fall migrants. Leader: Mike Welch, 301-685-3561.

Harford. Cromwell Valley Park. Meet at 7 AM at the P&R at Fallston Rd (Rte 152) just north of Harford Rd (Rte 147). This Baltimore Co park always holds surprises during late fall migration. Contact leader, Phil Powers, at 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net.

Howard. Mt. Pleasant Farm, Howard Co Conservancy. Meet 8 AM at parking lot. Easy walking through the farm's fields. Tree lines, hedgerows, and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Prime time for sparrows. Great opportunity for flyovers. Facilities available. Leader: Scott Berglund, 410-750-2568 or Business250@yahoo.com.

Sunday, October 9

BIG SIT. Anne Arundel. Come and sit some of the day or all day. We typically call it quits between 3 and 5 PM. Meet 7 AM at Ft. Smallwood.

Leader: Tom Bradford, 410-987-0674 or tabslab@aol.com.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for early winter waterfowl, raptors, thrushes, and other passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 9 AM at Nature Center parking lot. Leaders: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or dterry12@verizon.net, Bob Rineer, 410-252-6408 or rrineer1@jhmi.edu, and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

BIG SIT. Cecil. Turkey Pointers' BIG SIT! Birding's Most Sedentary Event. Our BIG SIT! count circle will be based at the big cedar tree near the lighthouse at Turkey Point. Chris Starling, our official counter, will start at 4:30 AM, but you can come whenever you like and stay for as long as you like. Hint: If you have any any goodies you want to share, pack some extras for our stalwart BIG SIT! counters, to keep their spirits up. It is not necessary to contact the leader before this event; just come on out any time during the day. Info: Chris Starling, cstar.email@gmail.com.

Harford. Broad Creek Pontoon Boat Excursion. Join leader Dennis Kirkwood for this unique birding and boating experience along scenic Broad Creek and the Conowingo Lake. Because space is limited, advance reservations are required. Contact Dennis at 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verizon.net. Meet at the Broad Creek boat launch on Caselton and Paddrick Rds at 2 PM.

BIG SIT. Montgomery. Join the Sitting Ducks at Black Hill RP starting at dawn and continuing until ? Come for the day or just for a few hours. Meet at the dike across the road from the park boat ramp. For info

or directions, call the leader: Chuck Parker, 240-446-8423 or chparker@access.k12.wv.us.

Talbot. Black Walnut Point Hawk Watch. Various species of raptors pass this convergence point in the autumn; harriers, accipiters, buteos, falcons, and eagles are reliably seen. Leader: Andrew Bullen, 410-763-8156. Depart St. Michaels Village Shopping Center at 9 AM. Or, early birders seeking other migrants and shorebirds can depart St. Michaels at 7 AM. Early birding leader is Jan Reese, 410-745-2875.

Tuesday, October 11

MEETING. **Allegany/Garrett.** Dr. Gwen Brewer and George Jett will present "A Snapshot of Cuba Today." 7 PM in Rm 327 Compton Hall, Frostburg State U., Frostburg.

Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: Joan Cwi, 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

Thursday, October 13

MEETING. **Howard.** "Cape May Capers," by Kurt Schwarz. Southern NJ is best known for its annual fall hawk migration, but other good birds show up as well. Kurt will review the major birding sites as well as some lesser known ones and show photos of expected and rare species he has found. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at the new Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

MEETING. **Talbot.** 7 PM William Hill Manor Auditorium. Speaker TBA.

Saturday, October 15

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: John Landers, 410-426-3374 or dado1bw@aol.com.

Baltimore. Youth Birding at Cromwell Valley Park. Ages 8-15 with parent. Learn how to use field guides and iPod apps to locate birds. Reservations required; contact leader: Rose Anderson, 443-802-8012 or rose.k.anderson@gmail.com.

Carroll. Hashawha. Meet 8 AM at the Bear Branch Nature Center parking lot. Moderate walking on trails. We will be looking for late migrants such as warblers, vireos, thrushes, flycatchers, etc. Leader Jerry Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

Howard. Lake Elkhorn. Meet 8 AM at Dockside parking lot. Easy walking along the lake and to Forbay Pond. Migrants will be moving through; warblers are generally in abundance; the lake can turn up interesting surprises; and hawks are also possible. No facilities. Leader: Allen Lewis, allenlewis@gmail.com.

Sunday, October 16

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Talbot. Wades Point, Claiborne. Species likely: late migrants and early winter arrivals. Leader: Vince DeSanctis, 410-886-2009. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Leader will meet group at 7:30 AM directly at the Claiborne Pier.

Tuesday, October 18

Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net.

Wednesday, October 19

MEETING. **Montgomery** "State of the Birds." Greg Butcher, Director of Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society, will describe how the Christmas Bird Count data and Breeding Bird Survey data help identify birds of conservation concern. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian

Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Anna Urciolo at urcioloa@sidwell.edu.

Thursday, October 20

MEETING. **Caroline.** Program TBA. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Library, 100 Market St, Denton. Info: Debby Bennett, dabennett1996@gmail.com.

Howard. David Force Park. Meet 8 AM at the park sign on Pebble Beach Dr. Easy walking through the wooded trails and fields of this Howard Co Open Space site. Streams and pond provide habitat for numerous bird species. No facilities. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057 or WrightM_29067@msn.com.

Saturday, October 22

Frederick. Fall at Audrey Carroll. Fall sparrows, migrants, and any number of surprises can occur at this lovely Audubon Sanctuary. Leader: Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Howard. Sparrow Big Day. Full day. Limit: 12. Scour wetlands and dry fields in this intensive search for as many sparrows as possible. Going for 12 species! Previous years have turned up non-sparrow rarities, too. Expect difficult walking for most of the day. Knee boots a must. Facilities at some spots. Contact Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net or 410-461-336, to sign up and get info.

Saturday-Sunday, October 22-23

Talbot. Hawk Mountain, PA. Overnight trip. Leaders: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742, and Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM on Sat, Oct 22. Participants make their own overnight reservations. Wear boots or sturdy shoes for climb up to the mountain lookouts. Bring cushion to sit on. Add'l info to follow via club listserver.

Sunday, October 23

Harford. Chino Farms. This Eastern Shore location offers diverse habitat promising an array of avian species, with a focus on sparrows.

Calendar *continued from page 21*

This three-quarter day trip will include stops for lunch as well as some other nearby possible hot spots, time permitting. Leader: Matt Hafner, 410-971-3203 or mh1920@aol.com.

H Howard. West Friendship Park. Meet 8 AM at shopping center just west of Rtes 32 and 144; we will carpool to park nearby. Moderate walking along field edges and through stream valleys. Small ponds may have some surprises. Expect wet areas. Rustic facilities. Leaders: Jeff Culler, cullersful@hotmail.com or 410-465-9006, and Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329 or LBRoller@verizon.net.

Tuesday, October 25

H Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. See Sep 6 listing for details. Leader: Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com or 410-557-2456.

POTLUCK DINNER AND MEETING.

Washington. Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Meet at the Nature Center for the potluck dinner at 6 PM. Bring a dish to share, along with your own plate, utensils, and drink. Meeting begins at 7 PM. Program TBA. Call Anna, 301-797-8454, for add'l info.

Saturday, October 29

H Baltimore. Hawk Mountain. All-day trip to see migrating hawks and magnificent scenery in PA. Leaving Timonium P&R at 7 AM sharp to arrive at 10 AM. \$5 trail fee charged by the Hawk Mountain Association, which maintains the place. Trip is off if rain or fog. Rain date: Sat, Nov 5. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h), 443 904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

H Carroll. Waggoner's Gap, PA. Another great place for hawks. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-303-2792. Meet 7 AM in Westminster at Town Mall parking lot between Belk and KFC.

H Cecil. Avalon Sea Watch. This trip involves no walking at all. Pull your car up to the seawall at the Sea Watch site and take out your lawn chair, blanket, scope, and hot drink, and settle in for a day of scanning the seas. Meet near Dunkin' Donuts in Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40 and 213

in Elkton at 7 AM, to car-pool for the full-day trip. Bring scope if you have one. No designated leader.

H Harford. Owl Prowl at Eden Mill. Search for owls during this Northern Saw-whet eruption year at this reliable location for these nocturnal hunters. Banding of saw-whets will take place. Meet with leader Dave Webb, 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net, at the Mill at 7 PM.

Sunday, October 30

H Montgomery. Oaks Landfill. Explore this now-closed landfill adjacent to Blue Mash Nature Trail. Mostly-open terrain on a gravel road, including two pond views and one hill climb of moderate difficulty. Possible sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl. Leader will carry scope for distant birds. We have special permission to enter this "closed to the public" landfill so *reservations are essential*. Limit: 16. Meet at 8 AM. For reservations and more info, contact the leaders: Mark England, 240-207-3132 (h) or 240-375-4500 (m), and Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

H Talbot. Ferry Neck. Bellevue Ferry Dock for waterfowl and property on Irish Creek and the Choptank for land birds and waterfowl. Leaders: Priscilla and Paul Thut, 410-745-6657. Breakfast hosts: Priscilla and Paul Thut. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM or meet leaders at Bellevue Ferry Dock at 7:30 AM.

Tuesday, November 1

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. "A Birding Trip to Costa Rica" with *Gary Van Velsir*. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks; show starts about 7:15 PM. Note: Meeting cancelled if Balt. City schools are closed that day for bad weather. When in doubt, check with lecture chairman Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, November 2

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Telescope can be useful. Cancelled

in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Birding in Turkey" by *Dave Harvey*. 7:30 PM at the S Carroll Senior Center, 5928 Mineral Hill Rd, Eldersburg. Contact Dave Harvey at 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program and speaker TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James Street, Elkton. For more info, contact President Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

Thursday, November 3

MEETING. **Frederick.** MOS Records Committee member *Ron Gutberlet* will entertain us with "A Year on the Road with North American Birds." 7 PM at Homewood at Cruiland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Friday, November 4

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "The Birds and Other Wildlife of the Galapagos and Conservation Challenges" by *Dr. Graham Watkins*. 8 PM Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

H Frederick. First Fridays. Leader and destination TBA. Meet at Culler Lake in Baker Park at 8 AM. For info, contact Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

DINNER MEETING. **Harford.** Our dinner meeting will start at 6:15 PM and a business meeting will follow at 7 PM. *Bob and Susan Hood* will present "From the Arctic to the Desert: Grand Colorado Birding Adventure." Call 410-692-5905 for dinner reservations or for more info.

H Washington. Lamb's Knoll. Visit Project Owl-net at Lamb's Knoll and observe Northern Saw-whet Owl banding by Steve Huy. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and be prepared to stay as late as midnight. Meet at 9:15 PM at the Boonsboro P&R next to Thompson's Gas. Registration is limited. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454.

H Indicates Field Trip

Friday-Sunday, November 4-6

Baltimore. Youth Birding Weekend at Irish Grove Sanctuary, near Crisfield, Somerset Co. We will bird with other young birders from the Eastern Shore. We will bird at Chincoteague I. and the 1,500-acre marsh/pine forest at Irish Grove. Optional three-hour canoe trip at Janes I. SP. Meals and room provided at about \$30. Young birders must attend with a parent or sanctioned adult guardian. Pre-registration required: Marty Brazeau: 410-583-0275 or tropicbird@verizon.net.

Saturday, November 5

ANNUAL BANQUET. Allegany/Garrett. Ron Gutbertlet will present "Alaska 2008: Gambell, Nome, and Homer." Gathering starts at 5:30 PM, dinner at 6 PM. Frostburg United Methodist Church. Please contact Charlotte Folk for dinner reservations at 301-689-6587 or mail your check to her at 179 Mt Pleasant St, Frostburg, MD 21532. The cost for the dinner is \$15.

Anne Arundel. Swan Creek Wetlands. Swan Creek is a limited-access preserve northern Anne Arundel Co that has quickly developed into a magnet for all types of birds. Stan Arnold, thrushhost@gmail.com, will meet people at the site at 8 AM. Please be prompt as we have only three hours on the property. Afterwards, we'll visit Fort Armistead.

Baltimore. Rain date for Hawk Mountain trip.

Frederick. Town Hill. 3/4 day. We will head off to Allegany Co and this lovely hawk watch point to enjoy the view and look for migrating raptors. Leader: Kathy Brown, 301-865-1369.

Harford. Susquehanna SP. Visit a prime Harford county birding spot; the varied habitats found here attract a diverse variety of passerines, raptors, and waterfowl. Meet at 8 AM at the Rock Run Mill. Leaders are Tom Congersky, 410-658-4137 or jnjtcon@zoominternet.net, and Randy Robertson.

Howard. Sharps at Waterford Farm. Meet 8 AM at farm parking

area, through barns on right. Moderate walking over crop stubble, farm roads, and paths on this working farm. Porta-pots available. Waterproof footwear and clothing advisable in wet weather; route includes one small stream crossing. Leader: Wes Earp, the_earps@verizon.net or 410-531-3197.

Sunday, November 6

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM west end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Jeff Culler, cullersfuls@hotmail.com or 410-465-9006.

Montgomery. Lois Green CP. Half day. Songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl are possible. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot on Snouffer School Rd, Gaithersburg. Reservations required. For detailed directions and reservations, call leader Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

Talbot. Pickering Creek Audubon Center. New fall arrivals and wintering species of field, forest, and wetlands. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169. Breakfast hosts: Carolyn and Les Roslund. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Wednesday, November 9

MEETING. Montgomery. "Wildlife of Northern Ecuador and Amazonia." Suzanne Dater spent two weeks in northern Ecuador in late May and early June 2010 observing and photographing wildlife. She will show photographs of 85 species of beautiful birds. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Anna Urciolo at urcioloa@sidwell.edu.

Thursday, November 10

MEETING. Talbot. 7 PM William Hill Manor Auditorium. Speaker: TBA.

Friday, November 11

Montgomery. LBJs at Blue Mash. Half day. Blue Mash is hoppin' with Little Brown Jobs; we'll work on the

basics of sparrow ID of common species, like Song and Field and Chipping, while keeping an eye out for less-likely White-crowned and Swamp. This trip is primarily for beginners, but all are welcome. For reservations, time, and directions, contact the leader: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252 or lydiaschindler@verizon.net.

Saturday, November 12

Howard. Howard Waterfowl Search. Meet 8 AM Broken Land Pkwy parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Plan to visit the Columbia lakes to search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterfowl. Easy walking. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@verizon.net, 410-461-1643.

Washington. Fort Frederick. Meet at the MVA parking lot in Hagerstown at 7 AM for a half-day trip to Fort Frederick and Big Pool. Contact trip leaders Linda and Bruce Field at 301-797-6189 for more info.

Sunday, November 13

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for early winter waterfowl, raptors, thrushes, and other passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 9 AM at Nature Center parking lot. Leaders: Bob Rineer, 410-252-6408 or rrineer1@jhmi.edu, and Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Facilities available. Leaders: Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com.

Talbot. Wye Island for waterfowl, winter birds, and late migrants. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM or meet leader at Wye Island bridge at 7:30 AM.

LAST CALL

... for **Fall Count Data**. Submit to county coordinators by October 7.

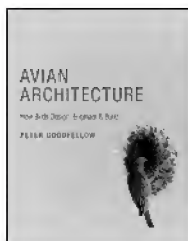
... for the **2012 Pin Contest**.
Submit entries to John Malcolm at
smudgie@comcast.net by November 1.

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BOOK REVIEW

Avian Architecture: How Birds Design, Engineer and Build, by Peter Goodfellow • Princeton University Press (Ivy Press Limited), 2011. 160 pp. \$27.95.



This spring I found two Acadian Flycatcher nests. Both were betrayed by the females' habit of making soft, down-slurred calls while brooding. One nest was a typical Acadian messy-looking cup with long straggling pieces of grass hanging from it. The other was a frail shallow hammock that looked as tidy as

half a walnut shell. The larger, messier nest fledged three babies, while the other nest fledged only one. Could the smaller, atypical nest perhaps have been the first one ever for that Acadian lady?

If you like to ask questions about bird life (and who in MOS doesn't?), *Avian Architecture* is a great book for you. It's crammed with 300 full-color images, case studies of 35 species of birds world-wide, and unique drawings and commentary on nest structures. The book is a treat to page through and informative to study.

Without blueprints, tools, or hands, how do those avian engineers build the structures that intrigue us so? Author Peter Goodfellow, a retired English professor and birdwatcher, provides answers, focusing on the architectural characteristics and individual variations in nest construction.

Goodfellow's focus is different from that of Hal Harrison's *Eastern Birds' Nests* in the Peterson Field Guide series. Harrison's photographic guide is organized by species, while Goodfellow discusses nine types of nest: scrapes; holes and tunnels; platforms; aquatic; cup-shaped; domes; mud nests; hanging, woven and stitched nests; mounds; and group nests. He also has a chapter on courts and bowers, for though each is a male bird's advertising ploy rather than a brood site, this "statement architecture" requires similar skills and materials.

For each type of nest, Goodfellow provides a "blueprint" drawing of several representative forms, showing measurements and egg placement. For minimalist nests like scrapes, this is pretty easy to see, but the blueprints of more complicated designs illustrate birds' amazing ability to create intricate structures. Sections on nest materials and features describe the use of such components as spider silk, lichens, and mud, plus techniques for providing insulation, camouflage, and wind protection. Then, for each form, the author gives us several double-page case studies of species that build that type of nest, with drawings and photographs of nests, courtship displays, nest defense, and care of the young.

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